AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 05 April 2004 (05.04.04); original claims 1-20 replaced by amended claims 1-24 (5 pages)]

1. A method of processing plant material residue remaining after primary juice has been extracted from the plant material, said method comprising the steps of:

extracting, using an extraction liquid in a diffusion extractor, at least one liquid portion from said plant material residue;

processing said at least one liquid portion to form a recovered liquid; and

recycling said recovered liquid as said extraction liquid.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said at least one liquid portion comprises wet mash extracted from said plant material residue.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein said processing is selected from a group consisting of pressing and evaporating, and said processing forms post-processing liquid, said post-processing liquid being recycled as at least part of said extraction liquid.

4. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said at least one liquid portion comprises a substantially liquid mixture, and said processing comprises fractioning said substantially liquid mixture to form said recovered liquid.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein said fractioning includes reverse osmosis.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein said plant material residue is fermented plant material residue and said recovered liquid comprises an alcoholic mixture, said fractioning further comprises splitting alcohol from said alcoholic mixture to form a reduced alcoholic liquid, said reduced alcoholic liquid being recycled as at least part of said extraction liquid.

7. The method according to claim 6 wherein said splitting is distilling.

8. A method according to claim 6 or 7, wherein secondary juice remains after said recovered liquid is fractioned from said at least one liquid portion, said method comprising the further step of adding said split alcohol to said secondary juice.

9. The method according to any one of claims 4 to 8, wherein secondary juice remains after said recovered liquid is fractioned from said liquid mixture, said method comprising the further step of adding said secondary juice to said primary juice.

10. The method according to any one of claims 4 to 9, wherein said plant material residue is from red wine grapes and said fractioning further comprises recovering resveratrol from said liquid portion.

11. The method according any one of claims 4 to 10, wherein said fractioning step further comprises the step of recovering tartrates from said liquid portion.

12. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 12, wherein said recovered liquid is substantially water.

13. A method of processing plant material residue remaining after primary juice has been extracted from the plant material, said method comprising the steps of:

extracting, using an extraction liquid in a diffusion extractor, a substantially liquid output and a substantially solid output from said plant material residue;

first processing said substantially solid output to form a first recovered liquid;

second processing said substantially liquid output to form a second recovered liquid; and

recycling said first and second liquid as said extraction liquid.

14. An apparatus for processing plant material residue remaining after primary juice has been extracted from the plant material, said apparatus comprising:

a diffusion extractor for extracting, using an extraction liquid, at least one liquid portion from said plant material residue;

a processing device for processing said at least one liquid portion to form a recovered liquid, wherein said recovered liquid is recycled as said extraction liquid.

15. The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said at least one liquid portion comprises wet mash extracted from said plant material residue.

16. The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said processing device is selected from a group consisting of a press and an evaporator, and said device forming post-processing liquid, said post-processing liquid being recycled as at least part of said extraction liquid.

17. The apparatus according to any one of claims 14 to 15, wherein said at least one liquid portion comprises a substantially liquid mixture, and said processing device comprises a fractioning device for fractioning said substantially liquid mixture to form said recovered liquid.

18. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said plant material residue is fermented plant material residue and said recovered liquid comprises an alcoholic mixture, said fractioning device further splitting alcohol from said alcoholic mixture to form a reduced alcoholic liquid, said reduced alcoholic liquid being recycled as at least part of said extraction liquid.

19. The apparatus according to claim 18, wherein secondary juice remains after said recovered liquid is fractioned from said at least one liquid portion, wherein said split alcohol is added to said secondary juice.

20. The apparatus according to any one of claims 17 to 19, wherein secondary juice remains after said recovered liquid is fractioned from said liquid mixture, wherein said secondary juice is added to said primary juice.

21. The apparatus according to any one of claims 17 to 20, wherein said plant material residue is from red wine grapes and said fractioning further recovers resveratrol from said liquid portion.

22. The apparatus according any one of claims 17 to 21, wherein said fractioning further recovers tartrates from said liquid portion.

23. The apparatus according to any one of claims 14 to 22, wherein said recovered liquid is substantially water.

24. The apparatus of processing plant material residue remaining after primary juice has been extracted from the plant material, said apparatus comprising:

a diffusion extractor for extracting, using an extraction liquid, a substantially liquid output and a substantially solid output from said plant material residue;

processing device for processing said substantially solid output to form a first recovered liquid; and

fractioning device for fractioning said substantially liquid output to form a second recovered liquid; wherein said first and second liquid are recycled as said extraction liquid.